

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05

SS-15 SSO-00 /067 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/ARP - MR. DICKMAN

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 084746

O 310140Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USMISSION SINAI
CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 30

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 30,
1976:

BEFORE I TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS, I WOULD LIKE TO ANSWER
SOME QUESTIONS THAT WERE TAKEN YESTERDAY WHICH WE DID NOT
POST.

FIRST, I JUST WANTED TO RECONFIRM WHAT I INDICATED TO JOE.
HE ASKED: HAD THE PRESIDENT OR ANY OTHER OFFICIAL
WRITTEN THE PLO IN CONNECTION WITH SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS
MADE WITH THE PLO AND HAS THE PLO WRITTEN TO ANY AMERICAN
OFFICIALS?

THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS NO.

I WAS ASKED WHETHER THE PLO PROVIDED ANY ESCORT TO OUR
PEOPLE MOVING AROUND IN WEST BEIRUT.

I CHECKED ON THAT THIS MORNING, AND I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT
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SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR SEELYE AND IN ADDITION TO

OUR OWN PERSONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL, THAT THE EMBASSY
SECURITY OFFICER HAS MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLO ESCORT
VEHICLES TO ACCOMPANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS FOR SECURITY
REASONS IN PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS AREAS IN WEST
BEIRUT AS NECESSARY.

Q. DO YOU WANT QUESTIONS ON THAT NOW?

A. WHY DON'T I GO THROUGH THIS, BECAUSE I HAD A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON THE PLO WHICH WE DIDN'T POST WHICH I WANTED TO GET ON THE RECORD.

Q. DO YOU MIND READING A LITTLE BIT OF THAT LAST SENTENCE BACK -- OF ESCORT VEHICLES?

A. TO RECAPITULATE -- SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR SEELYE -- SINCE THE TIME OF THE ARRIVAL OF AMBASSADOR SEELYE -- AND IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN PERSONAL SECURITY PERSONNEL, THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER HAS MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLO ESCORT VEHICLES TO ACCOMPANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS FOR SECURITY REASONS IN PARTICULARLY DANGEROUS AREAS IN WEST BEIRUT AS NECESSARY.

I WAS ASKED ABOUT OUR CONTACT WITH THE PLO ABOUT THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, MR. WARING, AND MR. MOGHRABI. THE QUESTION WAS HAD WE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THEM ABOUT THESE MURDERS.

THE ANSWER IS YES, WE HAVE.

WE HAVE DEMANDED THAT THE MURDERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, MR. WARING, AND MR. MOGHRABI BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE AND PUNISHED. WE MADE OUR POSITION KNOWN TO ARAB GOVERNMENTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEIR MURDER, AND WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THESE GOVERNMENTS SINCE THEN. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING THROUGH INTERMEDIARIES AND DIRECTLY WITH THE PLO AS WELL AS VARIOUS LEBANESE PARTIES TO FIND OUT WHAT WE CAN ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR DEATHS AND THE IDENTITY OF THE MURDERERS.

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WE HAVE PASSED TO THE PLO A STRONG REQUEST THAT THE MURDERERS BE IDENTIFIED, APPREHENDED, AND PUNISHED.

Q. STRONGLY?

A. A STRONG REQUEST.

WE HAVE AS YET NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION THAT THE PLO IS

HOLDING THE MURDERERS. WE HAVE NOT YET OBTAINED THE KIND OF DETAILS WE SEEK, AND WE ARE FOLLOWING THIS UP.

THE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PLO ON THIS SUBJECT OCCURRED IN THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER

AND HIS PLO CONTACTS ON THE SUBJECT OF SECURITY WHEN HE
RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE MURDERS.

AT THIS POINT WE DO NOT WANT TO GET INTO THE DETAILS OF
WHAT HAS BEEN SAID EXCEPT TO SAY THAT WE HAVE MADE OUR
POSITION CLEARLY KNOWN TO THE PLO.

I WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THAT OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PLO
HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO SECURITY MATTERS, AND THAT REMAINS
THE CASE.

OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PLO ABOUT THE MURDERS HAVE BEEN
WITHIN THAT CONTEXT, AND I WOULD CONCLUDE MY RESPONSE
TO THESE QUESTIONS BY SAYING, OBVIOUSLY, WE WANT TO DO
EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO BRING THE MURDERERS TO JUSTICE.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MEN WHO
WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN PICKED UP ARE, INDEED, THE
MURDERERS. YOU THINK THE MURDERERS ARE STILL AT LARGE?

A. NO. WHAT I AM SAYING IS THAT WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT
CONFIRMATION. WE KNOW THAT THE PLO HAS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED
THAT THEY HAVE BEEN, BUT WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMA-
TION OF THAT INFORMATION.

Q. DOES THAT MEAN THAT -- BY SAYING, "NO INDEPENDENT
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CONFIRMATION" DOES THAT MEAN THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE HAS
NOT CONFIRMED THIS TO US?

A. NO. WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION --

Q. I KNOW BUT --

A. OTHER THAN THE PLO --

Q. BUT I MEAN, IS IT FAIR TO ASSUME THAT THEY HAVE
CONFIRMED TO US WHAT THEY HAVE SAID PUBLICLY?

A. YES.

Q. YES. O.K.

Q. YOU CAST DOUBT ON THAT WHEN YOU SAY IN THIS STRONG
STATEMENT, OR WHATEVER, STRONG REQUEST -- REQUEST THE
APPREHENSION -- THAT WOULD SEEM TO PUT SERIOUS DOUBT ON
THE PLO STATEMENT THAT THEY HAVE ARRESTED ANYBODY.
OTHERWISE, WHY WOULD YOU NOW REQUEST THEIR APPREHENSION?

A. I AM NOT SAYING THAT TODAY WE HAVE ASKED FOR THEIR APPREHENSION. I AM SAYING, IN OUR EARLIER --

Q. WELL, THEY ANNOUNCED FAIRLY QUICKLY AFTER THE MURDERS THAT THEY HAD ARRESTED THESE PEOPLE. SO THE REQUEST WENT BEFORE THAT? YOU WERE IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THEM IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MURDER?

A. NO.

Q. DID THEY IDENTIFY THE PEOPLE THEY HAD IN CUSTODY, DID THEY CONFIRM WHAT THEY HAD SAID PUBLICLY EARLIER?

A. THAT IS MY UNDERSTANDING. BUT OUR POINT IS THAT WE HAD NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION BEYOND THE PLO.

Q. WHEN WAS THIS STRONG REQUEST MADE?

A. I DO NOT HAVE A DATE.
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Q. WELL, ARE YOU SUGGESTING A CONTINUING SERIES OF CONTACTS, RESULTING IN CONTINUING APPEALS TO THE PLO? OR SHORTLY AFTER THE JUNE 31ST CONTACT, YOU MADE THIS STRONG REQUEST, AND THAT WAS IT?

A. I WOULD ASSUME THAT THE STRONG REQUEST WAS MADE RIGHT AFTER THE MURDERS, THROUGH INTERMEDIARIES, TO THE PLO.

Q. I SEE.

A. AND THAT INTEREST WAS FOLLOWED UP AFTER WE BEGAN DIRECT CONTACT BY THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER.

Q. I HAVE ANOTHER QUESTION ABOUT THE WAY IN WHICH THIS WHOLE THING HAS DRIBBLED OUT OVER THE LAST WEEK:

ON TUESDAY, AS RECENTLY AS TUESDAY, YOUR DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ASIAN AFFAIRS, MR. DAY, WAS BEFORE A SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE, IN A HEARING DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY TO THE ASSASSINATION. HE WAS THEN ASKED, AND THE SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH -- HE WAS THEN ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PLO IN CONNECTION WITH THE MURDER. AND HE WAS EVIDENTLY UNDER

INSTRUCTIONS TO SAY, "NO," BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT HE SAID. NOW WHY CAN'T THIS BE DISCUSSED CANDIDLY -- THIS WAS PUBLIC -- THIS WAS A PUBLIC HEARING AND PERHAPS HE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE -- BUT I SIMPLY DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT

HAS BEEN GOING ON ALL WEEK.

A. I CANNOT GIVE YOU AN EXPLANATION FOR THAT. I DID NOT KNOW MR. DAY HAD BEEN ASKED THAT QUESTION.

Q. WELL, LET'S GO BACK TO YESTERDAY WHEN SOMEBODY ASKED YOU, ACCORDING TO MY NOTES, HOW DEPENDENT THE AMERICANS ARE IN BEIRUT ON THE PLO?

A. YES.

Q. AND YOUR REPLY WAS, AS I HAD IT, THAT THEY ARE NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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DEPENDENT ON THE PLO. WELL, THIS SEEMS TO BE AN ABSOLUTE, TOTAL CONTRADICTION OF FACT.

A. NO, I WOULD NOT CONCEDE THAT POINT. I THINK IT WAS THE QUESTION OF THE PRESENCE OF OUR EMBASSY --

Q. WE ARE NOT USING THE SAME LANGUAGE;

A. WE COULD MOVE AROUND IN WEST BEIRUT WITHOUT A PLO ESCORT VEHICLE, AND THERE PROBABLY ARE MOVEMENTS WITHOUT IT. THE FACT IS, IT IS A QUESTION OF IMPROVING THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE, BUT WE COULD STILL MOVE AROUND WITHOUT IT. AND THE SAME QUESTION WITH THE EMBASSY -- THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE PLO IS THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT IN SECURITY.

Q. I'M SORRY -- AND I DON'T REACT LIKE THIS NORMALLY, BUT WE ARE NOT SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE. WE ARE PLAYING SEMANTIC GAMES HERE, AND I DON'T WANT TO PICK UP MARVIN'S WORDS FROM A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, BUT THIS IS TOO MUCH.

Q. PICK IT UP, BOY. WHY NOT?

Q. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY YOUR INITIAL STATEMENT WHEN YOU SAY THE SECURITY OFFICER HAS MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLO VEHICLES TO ACCOMPANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS FOR SECURITY REASONS? WHAT IS THE FREQUENCY OF THESE ESCORTS? DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE PLO IS LITERALLY OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY

AND THEY ARE MAKING REGULAR, DAILY SECURITY RUNS --

A. NO.

Q. -- WITH THEIR VEHICLES?

A. NO. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT DEPENDING ON WHERE AN OFFICIAL IS GOING ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS, THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER MAKES A DETERMINATION BASED ON THE LOCALE TO WHICH HE IS GOING, WHETHER HIS SECURITY WOULD BE IMPROVED BY, IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN SECURITY PERSONNEL--
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IF THERE WAS A PLO ESCORT.

Q. WELL, THIS IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT RELATIONSHIP, TO SUPPORT MY COLLEAGUE, THAT YOU HAVE BEEN CONVEYING AND YOUR ASSOCIATES HAVE BEEN CONVEYING, ABOUT THE DEGREE OF CONTACT WITH THE PLO. THERE HAS BEEN NO PREVIOUS INDICATION WHATSOEVER THAT THERE WAS ANYTHING AS REGULAR AS ESCORT RUNS WITH THE PLO. ALL THE PREVIOUS INDICATION WAS THAT THIS WAS USED FOR EVACUATION PURPOSES, AND ANYTHING ELSE WAS MOST EXTRAORDINARY. NOW YOU ARE TELLING US THAT THIS IS A RATHER SYSTEMATIC THING.

A. FIRST, I DID NOT KNOW THAT THERE WERE PLO ESCORT VEHICLES UNTIL I SOUGHT THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION THAT WAS RAISED AT THIS BRIEFING YESTERDAY. BUT I WOULD REMIND YOU THAT IN THE ANSWER WE POSTED, WE DID SAY THAT WHEN THE CONTACTS BEGAN WITH THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER, AROUND THE END OF JUNE, THAT IT CONCERNED THE SECURITY OF OUR PERSONNEL IN THEIR MOVEMENTS IN WEST BEIRUT --

Q. YES. BUT THAT --

A. WHEN I WAS PROVIDED THAT INFORMATION AT THAT TIME, I DID NOT KNOW THAT IT ALSO INCLUDED PLO ESCORT VEHICLES.

Q. WELL, THEN MY QUESTION, I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT: WHAT IS THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH PLO ESCORT OFFICERS ACCOMPANY AMERICAN OFFICIALS? THAT MAKES A TREMENDOUS DIFFERENCE HERE, WHETHER IT IS ONCE A WEEK, OR ONCE AN HOUR, OR ONCE A DAY.

A. I JUST CANNOT ANSWER THAT QUESTION. I DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY TIMES OUR FEW OFFICERS THERE -- I KNOW THAT AT LEAST ON ONE OCCASION -- ON ONE CALL THAT AMBASSADOR SEELEY MADE WHILE HE WAS STILL THERE -- THAT THERE WERE PLO ESCORT VEHICLES. WE HAVE A FEW SUBSTANTIVE OFFICERS WHO ARE STILL OPERATING, AND I JUST DO NOT KNOW THE

FREQUENCY OF THEIR CALLS, OR WHEN THIS SECURITY ARRANGEMENT IS REQUIRED.

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Q. IF YOU WILL FORGIVE ME -- YOU KNOW THIS DRIBBLES OUT LIKE THE DANCE OF THE SEVEN VEILS. EACH DAY WE GO THROUGH A DIFFERENT VEIL. HOW MANY MORE ARE THERE, HERE, IN TERMS OF TRYING TO GET THE SPECIFICS OF THE FREQUENCY OF THE CONTACT? THAT IS THE ONLY THING THAT IS GOING TO GIVE US ANY SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION.

A. THE CONTACT IS LIMITED TO THE SECURITY CONTACT.

Q. WELL, THAT DOESN'T TELL US ANYTHING BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW HOW FREQUENT THE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS ARE.

A. WE DID NOT INDICATE THAT IT WAS INFREQUENT WHEN WE POSTED OUR ANSWER. WE SAID THAT THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER WOULD REMAIN IN CONTACT AS REQUIRED.

Q. THERE IS NO INDICATION --

Q. WAIT A MINUTE --

Q. IN ANOTHER ASPECT --

Q. LET ME ASK ONE QUESTION, IF I MAY, IN THE CONTEXT OF SECURITY, BECAUSE I AM NOT QUITE SURE OF WHAT YOUR DEFINITION OF A SECURITY CONTACT IS.

DURING, AND JUST AFTER THE HIGHJACKING OF THE AIR FRANCE PLANE, WE WERE TOLD HERE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ALL APPROPRIATE PARTIES.

SINCE THAT WOULD FALL WITHIN THE TIME PERIOD THAT YOU HAVE NOW OUTLINED FOR US, IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THE SECURITY OFFICER IN BEIRUT AT ANY TIME, TOOK UP WITH THE PLO, THE SUBJECT OF THAT HIGHJACKING?

A. NO. HIS CONTACTS CONCERNED THE SECURITY OF OUR PERSONNEL AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BEIRUT.

Q. THE QUESTION BARRY RAISED, AND HENRY RAISED AGAIN TODAY, ABOUT THE SITUATION OF THE EMBASSY -- HOW

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INDEPENDENT IT IS, IN BEIRUT, IS STILL VALID; AND I WANT TO BRING IT UP AGAIN. ARE THESE ESCORTS SO NECESSARY, OR SO FREQUENT THAT WE CAN CHARACTERIZE THE AMERICAN

EMBASSY PERSONNEL AS VIRTUAL HOSTAGES TO THE PLO?

A. NO, I WOULD NOT ACCEPT THAT CHARACTERIZATION.

Q. IS IT SOMETHING LESS THAN THAT? CAN YOU CHARACTERIZE IT? IN WHAT WAY IS THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN OFFICIALS IN BEIRUT DEPENDENT UPON THE PLO?

A. I WILL RESTATE THAT THE PLO IS THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF SECURITY IN WEST BEIRUT --

Q. SO WE ARE DEPENDENT ON THEM.

A. AND IN TERMS OF OUR AMERICAN OFFICIALS TRAVELLING IN CERTAIN AREAS OF WEST BEIRUT, THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER, IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PERSONAL SECURITY OF THESE PEOPLE, MAKES A DETERMINATION THAT THEIR SECURITY IS IMPROVED BY HAVING PLO ESCORT VEHICLES ACCOMPANY THEM ON THEIR CALLS.

Q. IF THE PLO ESCORT DOES NOT ACCOMPANY THEM, WHO PRESENTS THE GREATEST DANGER TO THEIR SAFETY? THE PLO?

A. I THINK IT IS REPORTED DAILY, AND FAIRLY WELL KNOWN, THE DEGREE OF ANARCHY THAT EXISTS IN WEST BEIRUT -- WITH GUNFIRE AND ANARCHY --

Q. AND A PLO ESCORT CAR OBVIATES THAT DANGER?

A. THESE PEOPLE ARE ARMED, AND SO THE PEOPLE MOVING AROUND ARE UNDER PROTECTION. AND THAT IS OBVIOUSLY A DETERRENT. WHEN YOU ARE MOVING IN AN AREA LIKE WEST BEIRUT WHETHER YOU HAVE ARMED PROTECTION OR DO NOT HAVE ARMED PROTECTION CAN MAKE --

Q. WHAT KIND OF VEHICLES ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? ARE THESE APC'S WITH PLO FLAGS FLYING ON THEM? TANKS? HALF-TRACKS? WHAT? ARE THEY GREEN CHEVROLETS?
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A. I HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD WHETHER THEY ARE CARS OR TRUCKS. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT.

Q. KEN'S QUESTION IS RATHER PERTINENT IN THAT IT IS REASONABLE TO ASK WHY, FOR EXAMPLE, THE MARINE CONTINGENT AT THE EMBASSY IS NOT SIMPLY INCREASED -- IF THE DANGER TO AMERICAN CITIZENS IN WEST BEIRUT DID NOT COME FROM THE PLO -- IN OTHER WORDS CAME FROM OTHER FACTIONS -- IT CERTAINLY WOULDN'T BE NECESSARY TO HAVE A

PLO ESCORT.

A. I THINK IT WOULD BE UNPRECEDENTED FOR US TO USE MARINES TO PROVIDE ESCORT. THE MARINES ARE ASSIGNED TO EMBASSIES TO PROTECT THE BUILDING IN THAT AREA AND THE PEOPLE IN THE BUILDING.

Q. WELL THAT IS STILL SECURITY --

A. AS A RESULT OF THE REDUCTION OF OUR STAFF, WE HAVE REDUCED A NUMBER OF MARINES WHO WERE AT THE EMBASSY, IN ANY CASE, AND I DO NOT THINK IN ANYPLACE IN THE WORLD DO WE USE MARINES AS BODYGUARDS. OR AS PERSONAL BODYGUARDS FOR OUR PEOPLE.

Q. WELL I MEAN --

A. BUT WE ARE NOT USING THE PLOS AS BODYGUARDS, EITHER. WE STILL HAVE OUR OWN PERSONAL SECURITY PEOPLE.

Q. WELL IN THAT CASE, I WITHDRAW MY REFERENCE TO THE MARINES. WHY NOT ADDITIONAL STATE DEPARTMENT SECURITY OFFICERS? IF THE DANGER IS NOT COMING FROM THE PLO, WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO HAVE A PLO ESCORT?

A. I CANNOT GO BEYOND WHAT I HAVE BEEN TOLD -- THAT THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER MADE THIS DETERMINATION.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US IF THE PLO IS TAKING ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF GOODS, AS WELL UNCLASSIFIED

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AS PEOPLE IN THE EMBASSY? FOOD, MAIL, AND ALL THAT SORT OF THING?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT, I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK THAT.

Q. COULD YOU CHECK THAT?

A. I DON'T THINK SO, BUT LET ME CHECK INTO IT.

Q. IN THAT CONNECTION, CAN YOU TELL US WHETHER THERE ARE AMERICAN PLANES THAT COME INTO AIRPORT AT BEIRUT CARRYING SUPPLIES FOR THE EMBASSY? IF THAT IS THE CASE, HOW THOSE SUPPLIES TO THE EMBASSY -- WHETHER YOU AGAIN NEED AN ESCORT?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY AMERICAN PLANES COMING INTO THE AIRPORT.

Q. HOW DO SUPPLIES GET INTO THE EMBASSY?

A. I SUPPOSE --

Q. DO ANY GET IN?

A. I SUPPOSE THEY ARE OBTAINED ON THE LOCAL MARKET.

Q. WELL, IF SOMEBODY WANTS TO GO OUT AND BUY FOOD, DO THEY GO OUT BY THEMSELVES, OR DO THEY ALSO NEED AN ESCORT?

A. I DO NOT HAVE THAT DETAIL. LET ME SEE IF I CAN --

Q. JUST ONE SECOND, A PROCEDURAL MATTER HERE. ALL OF THE QUESTIONS I HAVE ASKED THAT YOU HAVE NOT ANSWERED I WISH YOU WOULD TAKE THOSE QUESTIONS. I DON'T WANT TO GET INTO A POSITION BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T SAY YOU WERE GOING TO TAKE THEM OR LOOK INTO THEM THAT THEY ARE JUST GOING TO DRIFT AWAY.

A. I THINK THE RECORD SHOWS THAT I HAVE ANSWERED QUESTIONS THAT I HAVEN'T ANSWERED EARLIER.
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Q. WELL, THE RECORD SHOWS A LOT OF THINGS OVER THE LAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS, AND WE CAN'T DEPEND ON THE RECORD. I'M ASKING SPECIFICALLY THAT YOU TAKE THE QUESTIONS.

A. WHAT ARE YOUR QUESTIONS?

Q. THE ENTIRE SERIES OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH THE TYPE OF PROTECTION, THE FREQUENCY OF PROTECTION THAT THE PLO IS PROVIDING, AND THE QUESTION WHETHER THE PLO ITSELF IS THE DANGER THAT THEY ARE PROTECTING AGAINST.

A. O.K.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHEN THESE ESCORT RUNS BEGAN, WHAT DATE?

A. NO.

Q. ARE WE GIVING THE PLO ANY CONSIDERATION IN RETURN FOR THEIR PROTECTION, PROVIDING THEM WITH GASOLINE, AMMUNITION, ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

A. NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO.

Q. THEY ARE DOING THIS OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF THEIR HEARTS?

A. I HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED OF ANY CONSIDERATION AS YOU HAVE DESCRIBED IT.

Q. ALSO, WAS THE ESCORT RUN THEIR SUGGESTION OR OURS?

A. I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK ON THAT.

Q. WOULD YOU CHECK ON ALL THAT, PLEASE?

A. YES.

Q. HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE NOW IN THE EMBASSY, AND OF THEM HOW MANY ARE OFFICERS, HOW MANY ARE SECURITY, AND HOW MANY SUPPORT? I HAVE SEEN THE FIGURE 14.

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A. WE HAVE 15. I DO NOT THINK WE PROBABLY WANT TO INDICATE HOW MANY ARE SECURITY.

Q. FIFTEEN OFFICERS OR FIFTEEN --

A. FIFTEEN TOTAL.

Q. TOTAL. THAT'S EVERYTHING.

A. THAT IS EVERYBODY. A FEW OF THOSE ARE SUBSTANTIVE OFFICERS.

Q. ARE THESE ESCORT ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE PLO STILL GOING ON WITH THE EMBASSY TRUNCATED TO THAT DEGREE?

A. YES.

Q. THEY ARE STILL GOING ON?

A. YES.

Q. YOU ALSO MENTIONED, I THINK, IN THE COURSE OF ALL THIS THAT AMBASSADOR SEELYE HAD MADE A CALL UNDER PLO ESCORT. CAN YOU GIVE MORE DETAIL ABOUT THAT?

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY MORE DETAILS. I WILL CHECK. BUT IT WAS IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. WAS THAT A CALL BY AMBASSADOR SEELYE UPON THE PLO?

A. NO, NO; IT WAS PROBABLY ON A LEBANESE OFFICIAL OF A LEBANESE PARTY.

Q. COULD YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THAT?

A. I WILL TRY.

Q. IN CONNECTION WITH THAT, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE SOME SENSE AS TO WHETHER THESE ESCORTS WERE PRIMARILY FOR SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE EMBASSY, LIKE SEELYE, OR UNCLASSIFIED

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WHETHER THEY WERE ALSO FOR PEOPLE GOING OUT TO BUY FOOD AND WHATNOT.

A. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED SPECIFICALLY THAT IT WAS FOR OFFICIAL CALLS.

Q. IT WAS FOR OFFICIAL CALLS?

A. BUT MARVIN, I BELIEVE, ASKED ABOUT WHAT SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS THERE WERE FOR GOING OUT TO STORES, AND I AM GOING TO CHECK THAT.

Q. SINCE THERE IS NO MORE GOVERNMENT IN LEBANON AND NO POLICE FORCE TO STATION ITSELF AROUND THE EMBASSY, AS IS SOMETIMES THE CASE, IS THERE A PALESTINIAN PROTECTIVE CORDON OR A SERIES OF DEFENDED POSITIONS OR DEFENSIBLE POSITIONS AROUND THE EMBASSY MANNED BY THE PLO?

A. NO, AS WE INDICATED IN THE BRIEFING EARLIER THIS WEEK, THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY SINCE MID-MARCH HAS ASSUMED SECURITY FOR THAT AREA IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY WHERE THE CHANCERY IS LOCATED.

Q. BOB --

A. KEN.

Q. ARE WE PROVIDED WITH SIMILAR SERVICE AS THE PLO PROVIDES FROM OTHER FACTIONS IN WEST BEIRUT? I MEAN, WHEN THE PLO IS NOT ACCOMPANYING US DO WE TURN TO ANY OTHER LEBANESE FACTION FOR PROTECTION AS OFFICIALS TRAVEL THROUGHOUT?

A. NO, NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PLO IS THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF SECURITY IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. TO COME BACK TO JERRY'S QUESTION, YOU DIDN'T ANSWER

DIRECTLY WHETHER THERE IS A PLO CORDON PERHAPS IN
ADDITION TO THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY?
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A. I HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED OF ANYTHING BEYOND THE
LEBANESE ARAB ARMY.

Q. I DON'T WANT TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD. AND I AM SURE
EVERYBODY UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF TRYING TO FIND
OUT WHO MURDERED AMBASSADOR MELOY AND HIS PEOPLE, AND
WE HAVE ASKED ABOUT THAT HERE REPEATEDLY. I'M JUST
TRYING TO ESTABLISH SOME SENSE OF YOUR DEFINITION OF
SECURITY.

TO FIND OUT WHO MURDERED AMBASSADOR MELOY, WHILE VERY
ADMIRABLE, I THINK, HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH PROVIDING
SECURITY FOR THE OFFICERS OF THE EMBASSY NOW -- UNLESS
YOU FEEL THAT THE PEOPLE WHO MURDERED MELOY ARE LOOSE
AND MAY ALSO ATTACK THE STAFF AT THE EMBASSY.

COULD YOU HELP US UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR DEFINITION OF
SECURITY IS SO THAT AS WE GO ON THROUGH THE NEXT WEEKS
WE DON'T GET A WHOLE RANGE OF THINGS THAT FALL UNDER
WHAT IS CALLED THE UMBRELLA OF SECURITY?

A. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING, AS I HAVE TRIED TO INDICATE
IN RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONS I TOOK YESTERDAY, THAT
IN THE CONTEXT OF SECURITY -- AND OBVIOUSLY THE MURDER
OF THOSE THREE PERSONS RELATES TO THE SECURITY OF OUR
PEOPLE.

Q. IF THESE MURDERERS ARE BELIEVED TO BE LOOSE --

A. WELL, NOT NECESSARILY.

Q. -- OR PART OF A GANG THAT IS STILL LOOSE, OR PART OF
A GROUP OR AN ARMY?

A. THE PLO, AFTER ALL, PUBLICLY STATED THAT IT HAD
APPREHENDED THESE PEOPLE AND INDICATED IT HAD SOME
KNOWLEDGE. SO, THEREFORE, IN ADDITION TO THE CONTACTS WE
MADE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MURDERS, OUR EMBASSY SECURITY
OFFICER RAISED IT, AS I SAID, IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WHEN HE
WAS TALKING ABOUT SECURITY WITH HIS PLO CONTACTS.
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Q. NOW, WE HAVE ASKED ABOUT WHAT STEPS THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN TAKING TO TRY TO GET AT THE MURDERERS OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, AND REPEATEDLY WE WERE TOLD THAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING EVERYTHING IT POSSIBLY COULD,

BUT YOU HAVE NEVER DEFINED IT. WE ARE PLEASED TO HAVE THIS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, BUT I AM PUZZLED AS TO WHY YOU ARE TELLING US THIS AND NOT GO BACK TO YOUR USUAL ANSWER, WHICH IS, "WE ARE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN."

A. I THINK THE EXPLANATION I CAN GIVE YOU IS THAT THESE QUESTIONS WERE ASKED POINTEDLY AND SPECIFICALLY, AND I TRIED TO OBTAIN AS RESPONSIVE AN ANSWER AS I COULD.

Q. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PLO'S EXPLANATION GIVEN TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS THERE AS TO THE AFFILIATION OF THOSE THEY PICKED UP FOR THE MURDER OF THE THREE MEN?

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY UNDERSTANDING OF THAT. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. THE DEPARTMENT, YOU SAY, IS ENGAGED IN DISCUSSIONS HERE, IS ENGAGED IN CONTACTS -- HAS THE PLO TOLD THE UNITED STATES THAT THESE PEOPLE THEY PICKED UP ARE MEMBERS OF THE PLO OR NON-MEMBERS OF THE PLO?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY HAVE SAID PUBLICLY ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF THESE PEOPLE. BUT, AS I SAID EARLIER, THAT WE ARE NOT ABLE TO GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THESE CONVERSATIONS EXCEPT TO SAY THAT WE HAVE MADE OUR POSITION CLEARLY KNOWN TO THE PLO.

Q. YOU CAN'T INDICATE WHETHER THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN TOLD THAT THESE PEOPLE WILL BE HANDED OVER?

A. I CAN'T INDICATE ANY ASPECT OF THE DETAILS.

Q. I WONDER IF I COULD REPEAT A QUESTION THAT I ASKED HERE A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO? WITH REFERENCE TO THE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PLO, DOES THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT UNCLASSIFIED

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REGARD THE PLO AS BEING REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON?

A. MARVIN ASKED ME THAT QUESTION YESTERDAY, AND I AM CERTAINLY NOT IN A POSITION TO CHARACTERIZE OR ASSESS THE

SUPPORT WHICH THE PLO HAS.

Q. I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO CHARACTERIZE IT, BUT SINCE QUITE CLEARLY YOU ARE DEALING WITH THE PLO ON A BASIS THAT SUGGESTS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THEM TO BE IN CONTROL OF WEST BEIRUT, OR AS MUCH IN CONTROL OF WEST BEIRUT AS ANYONE, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO ADDRESS THAT QUESTION.

A. WE ARE DEALING WITH THEM BECAUSE THEY ARE A FACTION THAT IS A PRESENT ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY, NOT BECAUSE OF ANY POLITICAL QUALITY THEY MAY HAVE OR HOW REPRESENTATIVE THEY ARE OR ARE NOT OF THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON AS A WHOLE. IT IS STRICTLY IN TERMS OF THE FACT THAT THEY ARE A PRINCIPAL ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY, AND OUR CONTACTS WITH THEM HAVE BEEN ON SECURITY.

Q. SO IF, FOR EXAMPLE, GEORGE HABASH'S FACTION WERE SUDDENLY TO GAIN CONTROL, WE CAN ASSUME THEN THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM --

A. NO, I WOULDN'T THINK SO.

Q. -- OR WITH HIS REPRESENTATIVE.

A. NO, I WOULDN'T ASSUME THAT. WE ARE NOT ESTABLISHING A GENERAL PRINCIPLE HERE. WE HAVE MADE A DECISION ON THE GROUND IN THIS PARTICULAR INSTANCE.

Q. FORGIVE ME, IT SEEMS TO ME YOU ARE ESTABLISHING A GENERAL PRINCIPLE, YOU ARE ESTABLISHING A PRINCIPLE THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT ITS PERSONNEL IN WEST BEIRUT. YOU ARE DEALING WITH THE PLO, YOU TELL US, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE FACTION THAT IS MOST IN CONTROL OF WEST BEIRUT.

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Q. YES.

Q. THEREFORE, I WONDER IF YOU WOULD EXPLAIN TO ME WHY IT IS ILLOGICAL TO COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT IF SOME OTHER FACTION WERE TO TAKE CONTROL YOU WOULD NOT DEAL WITH THEM.

A. BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT MADE THAT SORT OF AN ACROSS- THE BOARD DECISION. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE MADE A DECISION TO ESTABLISH THIS SECURITY CONTACT WITH THE PLO, PERIOD.

Q. JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU SAID YOU MADE A DECISION ON

THE GROUND IN THIS PARTICULAR INSTANCE. YOU DON'T MEAN TO IMPLY THAT THE DECISION WAS MADE LOCALLY, DO YOU?

A. NO.

Q. IT WAS MADE HERE IN THIS BUILDING?

A. RIGHT.

Q. ARE THE OFFICERS AND PERSONNEL OF ANY OTHER EMBASSY IN BEIRUT PROTECTED BY THE PLO?

A. I CANNOT ANSWER THAT QUESTION FOR OTHER EMBASSIES. CERTAINLY IN THE CASE OF THE -- I RECALL IN THE CASE OF THE BRITISH ORGANIZED EVACUATIONS, IT WAS PUBLICLY STATED THAT THE PLO WAS PROVIDING FOR THE SECURITY OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THOSE CONVOYS AS WELL OF CONVOYS OF OTHER EMBASSIES THROUGH AREAS CONTROLLED BY THE PLO.

Q. AMBASSADOR MELOY WAS KILLED ON THE 16TH OF JUNE. ARE YOU SAYING YOU HAD NO DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PLO BEFORE THE END OF JUNE?

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. ALTHOUGH BY THE 20TH OF JUNE THEY HAVE ALREADY SAID THEY HAD TAKEN THE PEOPLE.

A. BUT I WOULD REMIND YOU THAT WE COMMUNICATED TO THEM UNCLASSIFIED

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THROUGH INTERMEDIARIES OUR DEMAND THAT THE MURDERERS BE APPREHENDED AND PUNISHED.

Q. WOULD IT BE UNFAIR TO SAY THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS NOW DEALING WITH THE PLO AS IF IT WERE THE DE FACTO CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITY IN WEST BEIRUT; OR IS THERE DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE DOING AND THAT?

A. I THINK THE DISTINCTION IS THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH THEM ONLY AS IT RELATES TO SECURITY. THE CONTACT IS ONLY BY THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER WITH THE PLO WHO ARE CONCERNED WITH SECURITY.

Q. THAT WAS PART OF THE POINT OF MY QUESTION -- WHICH I HOPE YOU HAVE TAKEN -- ON WHETHER THEY ARE SEEING TO THE BRINGING IN OF MAIL POUCHES AND WHAT NOT. IF THAT IS THE CASE, THEN ARE WE DEALING WITH THEM -- AS IF THEY WERE THE GOVERNMENT?

A. I DON'T THINK THERE HAS BEEN MUCH MAIL THERE --

Q. THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN POUCHES, HAVE THERE NOT?

Q. COULD YOU ESTABLISH, FIND OUT, WHAT THE QUID PRO QUO IS? WHY IS THE PLO PROVIDING THIS SERVICE?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY QUID PRO QUO.

Q. COULD YOU TAKE THE QUESTION?

A. YES.

Q. DO WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE PLO? WE CAN'T DEAL WITH ANY OTHER FORCE IN WEST BEIRUT THAT WILL PROVIDE THE ESCORT?

A. NO, MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THEY ARE THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF SECURITY IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT, BUT THERE ARE OTHER ELEMENTS?

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A. WELL, MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THERE ARE NO SIMILAR PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS. I DON'T HAVE THOSE KIND OF DETAILS. THE JUDGMENT WAS MADE THAT THEY ARE CERTAINLY A PRINCIPAL OR AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT FOR SECURITY. THEY WERE THE ELEMENT THAT WAS DEALT WITH BY THE BRITISH AND WITH OURSELVES IN THE EVACUATIONS, AND IT WAS RELATED STRICTLY TO THE SECURITY OF OUR PEOPLE.

Q. DO WE HAVE ESCORT ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT WITH THE LEBANESE-ARAB ARMY?

A. I DO NOT KNOW THAT THEY ARE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE THAT, BUT LET ME SEE.

Q. COULD YOU CHECK, BECAUSE YOU HAVE TOLD US THAT THIS IS THE SECURITY FORCE AROUND THE EMBASSY, NOT THE PLO.

A. THAT IS CORRECT. BUT IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE LEBANESE, UNITS OF THE LEBANESE-ARAB ARMY, TOOK OVER THE SECURITY OF THAT GEOGRAPHIC VICINITY AROUND OUR CHANCERY FROM LOCAL MILITIA IN MID-MARCH, AND THAT IS THE ROLE THEY HAVE BEEN PERFORMING.

Q. AND YOU SAID THAT THE PLO HAS NOT BEEN THE SECURITY ELEMENT IN THE VICINITY.

A. IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE CHANCERY.

Q. SO, IF YOU WANTED TO GET OUT OF THE EMBASSY YOU WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE LEBANESE-ARAB ARMY LINES BEFORE YOU WOULD EVEN GET TO THE PLO.

A. GET BY THE LEBANESE-ARAB ARMY UNITS? I DO NOT KNOW IF YOU WOULD DESCRIBE THEM AS LINES. I THINK --

Q. THROUGH THEIR UNITS. SO, YOU HAVE NO PROBLEM GETTING THROUGH THOSE UNITS?

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY PROBLEM, NO.

Q. TO COME BACK TO THE LEBANON SITUATION FOR A MINUTE.
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I ASKED YOU A DAY OR SO AGO TO WHOM THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY REPORTED, AND I BELIEVE YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T KNOW. CAN YOU TAKE A QUESTION ON THAT, BECAUSE THAT LEAVES THE IMPLICATION THAT THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY IS A MILITARY FORCE WHICH IS APPARENTLY PROVIDING SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN EMBASSY SIMPLY OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF ITS HEART. I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT ITS AFFILIATION IS, TO WHOM IT REPORTS, AND IF YOU KNOW WHAT ITS TIES ARE WITH THE PLO, WHETHER IT IS AFFILIATED WITH THE PLO.

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT ITS TIES ARE. LET ME CHECK INTO THAT.

Q. AT THE RISK OF TRYING YOUR PATIENCE AND THAT OF MY COLLEAGUES, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THIS. FIRST OF ALL, DOES THE UNITED STATES STILL CONSIDER THE PLO A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO CHARACTERIZE THE PLO.

Q. WELL, HOW DO WE REGARD IT?

A. THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT PURPORTS TO REPRESENT A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PALESTINIANS.

Q. IT PURPORTS TO REPRESENT ALL PALESTINIANS.

Q. YOU ARE NOT GOING TO QUARREL WITH THAT CHARACTERIZATION?

A. I SAID IT PURPORTS TO.

Q. WELL, I AM ASKING YOU TO RESPOND TO THAT PURPORTION.

A. AS I SAID EARLIER THAT I WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSESS ITS CLAIMS.

Q. YOU DON'T SEE IT AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO CHARACTERIZE IT.
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Q. DID THE UNITED STATES EVER SEE IT AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. IT HAS NEVER CHARACTERIZED THE PLO AS ANYTHING BUT PURPORTING TO REPRESENT PALESTINIANS.

A. I DO NOT KNOW HOW WE DESCRIBED IT ON THE RECORD. MAYBE I CAN GET INR TO DO SOME RESEARCH FOR ME. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. PERHAPS YOU COULD LOOK IN YOUR OWN RECORD AND FIND OUT WHAT YOU HAVE CALLED IT IN THE PAST. YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE WILLING TO REPEAT IT NOW.

Q. CAN WE GET AN ANSWER TO THAT? SPECIFICALLY, WHAT DOES THE UNITED STATES THINK OF THE PLO? CAN WE GET A DEFINITE --

A. THE REASON THAT WE HAVE DEALT WITH THEM IS TO PROTECT AMERICAN LIVES -- THAT MOTIVATION IS NOT A QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION -- NOR WHAT WE THINK OF THEM OR WHAT OUR ASSESSMENT OF THEM IS.

Q. WHAT WE ARE DOING HERE, IF THIS IS THE CASE?

A. WHAT WE ARE DOING HERE IS HAVING A CONTACT WITH AN ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS PERMITTED US TO SAFELY EVACUATE SEVERAL HUNDRED AMERICAN CITIZENS FROM A VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION. IT IS ALSO -- WHAT IT MEANS IS WE ARE HAVING CONTACT WITH AN ORGANIZATION TO TRY TO IMPROVE THE SECURITY OF OUR DIPLOMATS WHO ARE TRYING TO FUNCTION IN A VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION.

Q. AND YOU ARE SAYING THIS ORGANIZATION, THIS TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, WHICH IS AS IT IS KNOWN, IS PROVIDING THIS ASSISTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THEY ARE GETTING NOTHING AT ALL IN RETURN FROM THE

UNITED STATES IN ANY MANNER, SHAPE OR FORM, IS THAT RIGHT?

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A. WELL, I ANSWERED THAT, BUT YOU ASKED ME TO TAKE IT, AND I DID TAKE IT. AND I AM NOT ABLE TO RESPOND TO A QUESTION I HAVE TAKEN FORTY MINUTES AGO, BECAUSE I HAVEN'T LEFT THE BRIEFING ROOM YET.

Q. FAIR ENOUGH. NOW, LET ME GO A LITTLE FURTHER. AS I VISUALIZE THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT -- AND THIS IS IMPORTANT -- THERE ARE AMERICANS AT THE EMBASSY IN BEIRUT. THEY ARE THERE OSTENSIBLY TO HELP BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT IN BEIRUT. HOW THEY ARE DOING IT, WE DON'T REALLY KNOW, SINCE THE AMBASSADOR IS GONE AND THERE IS AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN CHARGE, TOGETHER WITH ABOUT A DOZEN MARINES.

A. NO. IT WAS REPORTED THAT THERE IS A NEW DCM THERE BY THE NAME OF GEORGE LANE, WHO HAS ALSO JOINED THE STAFF. AND, ANY WAY, IS THAT A PERJORATIVE SENSE, AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER? MR. HUNT FROM THIS DEPARTMENT IS A DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER WITH CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE. AND, INCIDENTALLY, HE IS NOT AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER.

Q. NO, I AM NOT BEING PERJORATIVE ABOUT IT.

A. LET US CLEAR THE RECORD UP NOW. YOU WERE CHARACTERIZING MR. RAY HUNT AS THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER.

Q. YES.

A. HE IS NOT AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER. HE WAS SENT OUT THERE AS DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION.

Q. WELL, I UNDERSTOOD THAT SOMEBODY SAID--DIDN'T YOU SAY--

A. HE IS THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION. HE IS THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR OPERATIONS.

Q. WELL, GRANT YOU THAT. WHO IS HE SEEING IN BEIRUT?

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Q. THE PLO?

A. NO, HE WAS NOT SEEING THE PLO, OZZIE. I HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER IS THE ONLY OFFICER WHO HAS SEEN THE PLO.

Q. WHO IS HE SEEING?

A. HE HAS BEEN SEEING LEBANESE PARTIES, JOE.

Q. ALL RIGHT, NOW, THIS IS WHAT I AM GETTING AT. IF HE IS SEEING LEBANESE PARTIES, THE PLO IS ESCORTING HIM, SAY, TO SYRIANS, TO CHRISTIAN LEBANESE AND TO OTHERS. HOW DOES THE PLO DO THIS?

A. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Q. DON'T THEY COME UNDER FIRE? HOW CAN THEY PROTECT AMERICANS WHO GO INTO A SYRIAN CAMP OR A MARONITE CHRISTIAN CAMP?

A. NO ONE HAS SAID--I AM NOT AWARE THAT THERE IS A MARONITE CHRISTIAN CAMP IN WEST BEIRUT, JOE. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT AN AREA IN WHICH THE PLO IS A PRINCIPAL ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY. AND THAT IS ALL. IF THEY ARE NOT A PRINCIPAL ELEMENT IN THE SECURITY, THEY ARE NOT USED.

Q. TELL ME WHERE IN BEIRUT DO AMERICANS HAVE TO GO THAT THEY NEED PLO ESCORTS?

A. IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. BUT FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

A. BECAUSE THE PLO PROVIDES THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF SECURITY IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. THAT IS NOT MY QUESTION.

A. THEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR QUESTION.

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Q. FOR WHAT PURPOSE DO AMERICANS GO INTO AREAS CONTROLLED BY THE PLO WHEN YOU SAID THAT THE LEBANESE ARAB ARMY PROTECTS THE CHANCERY?

A. IT IS WHEN THEY MOVE FROM THE CHANCERY TO A POINT SOME DISTANCE AWAY FROM THE CHANCERY.

Q. WHAT POINTS ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? IS IT THEIR HOMES?

A. NO, I DID NOT SAY THAT. I SAID I WOULD CHECK INTO OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR MOVEMENTS. WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT IS IF THEY GO, IN THE COURSE OF THEIR OFFICIAL DUTIES, TO CALL ON SOMEBODY IN WEST BEIRUT, THE EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER MAKES A DECISION--IN THE INTEREST OF IMPROVING THEIR SECURITY--TO USE THE PLO, IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN PEOPLE AS AN ESCORT.

Q. ALL RIGHT. WELL, WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW THEN IS WHO DO THE AMERICANS CALL UPON THAT THEY NEED PLO ASSISTANCE?

A. THEY CALL ON THE PEOPLE WHO ARE IN WEST BEIRUT.

Q. ALL RIGHT. BUT WHO ARE THEY, SPECIFICALLY?

A. I DO NOT HAVE THEIR NAMES, JOE, AND I DO NOT KNOW THAT WE ARE GOING TO PROVIDE THEM TO YOU. THEY ARE THE PRINCIPAL LEBANESE PARTIES.

Q. WELL, WHY CAN'T WE GET TO THEM? WHY CAN'T YOU IDENTIFY THEM?

A. WELL, IN THE FIRST PLACE, I DON'T THINK PROCEDURALLY WE HAVE ALL THE NAMES, JOE; AND, IN THE SECOND PLACE, GIVEN OUR EFFORTS, I DO NOT THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE DIPLOMATIC PROCESS TO LIST PUBLICLY HERE EVERY DAY ALL OF THE PEOPLE IN LEBANON THAT OUR PEOPLE ARE CALLING ON. KISSINGER

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